

# **Blue Ribbon Commission on Transportation Investment Strategies Committee**

## **Final Meeting Summary** *Approved March 29, 2000*

**February 9, 2000**

**Present:** Dale Stedman, Chair, Bill Lampson, Vice-Chair, Ted Bottiger, Don Briscoe, Peter Hurley, Bettie Ingham, Andrew Johnsen, Charles Mott, Patricia Otley

**Absent:** Representative Shirley Hankins, Senator Mary Margaret Haugen, John Kelly

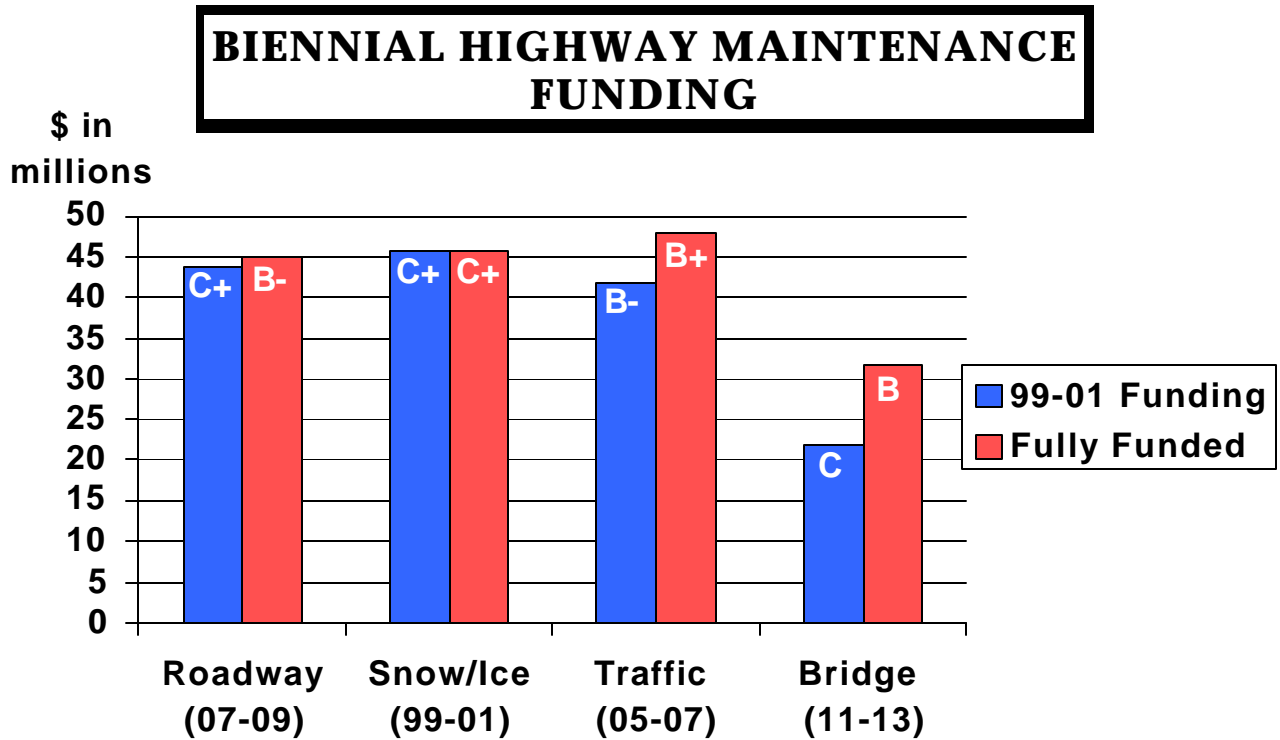
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The Chair called the meeting to order at 8:40 a.m. The Committee reviewed the minutes from the January 12<sup>th</sup> meeting and approved them as presented.

### **WSDOT's Maintenance and Preservation Programs**

Charlie Howard, Planning Director at the Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT), described the state's maintenance and preservation programs. He distinguished between the maintenance program, which addresses the day-to-day activities that keep the system operating, and the preservation and improvement programs, which involve improving the capital investments. Improvements are considered in the following categories: safety, congestion relief, economic initiatives, and environmental retrofit.

Ken Kirkland, State Maintenance Engineer, described what people mean when they say the maintenance program is "fully funded." WSDOT uses outcome-based performance measures to evaluate the effectiveness of the maintenance program. This program allows WSDOT to communicate the impacts of policy and budget decisions on program service delivery. The performance measures help to identify different levels of maintenance by visually rating pavement conditions between 'A' and 'F.' The following graph shows the desired level of maintenance and the level of funding in the 1999-2001 biennium.



After evaluating the level at which the system is performing, the next step is to consider how efficiently the levels are attained. Before that can happen, Kirkland believes that benchmarks must be established and a detailed inventory must be taken. The passage of Initiative 695 will reduce the level of funding to the maintenance programs. Additionally, skipping a biennium adds one-sixth of the lane miles to the backlog, because the roads are generally maintained on a 12-year cycle.

#### Developing Committee Options: “20-Year Investments”

Mike Doubleday, consultant to the Commission, presented an overview of the Committee’s progress in the “20-Year Investments” theme. The five options for proceeding on the theme were as follows:

1. State clear investment principles, policies, or criteria.
2. Recommend 20-year investments or priorities for all modes.
3. Decide on percentage spending for all modes – to reach priorities – based on indicators (e.g., population, historical budgeting, trends).
4. Research a cost per trip analysis for new capacity (for example, what is the cheapest increment of new capacity per rider or trip).
5. Add to, modify existing WTP service objectives and desired outcomes.

The Committee discussed Draft Investment Principles that staff had prepared. The following summary organizes the comments by the corresponding principle.

1. If there is no single solution, there are solutions when you mix strategies that will change by region and project. Avoid the use of the term 'levels' and instead use 'jurisdictions.'
3. Achieve predictability of overall funding for all modes and jurisdictions. Emphasize the importance of flexibility in funding.
5. There are problems with current benefit cost calculations. The Committee should come up with criteria for evaluating policies. A performance analysis is important, especially given the public concern over efficiency. Expand and explain this point further, potentially using language from the Washington Transportation Plan.
6. Reword this principle to distinguish it from number 5. Increase coordination in the project level analysis, and adopt a regional approach.
7. This principle is confusing and may be an issue for the Revenue Committee. Add to this section: a) Prioritize maintenance and preservation in an effort to take care of the system we have; b) Invest in human resources to support the transportation system.

Change the title of the next section from "Congestion Relief" to "Addressing Congestion and Providing Choice." This will reflect the fact that there is nothing that the Committee can do to provide congestion relief. At best, the Committee can hope to keep the conditions from getting worse, increase the choices people have, and gather community support. The Committee also asked staff to add a preamble to this section similar to those in the findings.

8. Strike the last sentence that reads: "Establish oversight committees to oversee spending." Determine whether this should apply to new money only.

The Committee adjourned at 12:00 p.m.